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12 September 1952

MEMORANDUM FOR: Chief, External Research Staff, OIR

SUBJECT: "Soviet Theory of War,"
A Proposed Study of

1. Pursuant to your recent conversation with Mr. Corson of this office, it will be much appreciated if your office will arrange to conduct a survey to determine what studies, if any, exist or are in preparation on the general subject of "Soviet Theory of War."

2. As you know this inquiry originated from [redacted] and the suggested terms of reference might be along the following lines: 50X1

What has been the Russian attitude with regard to the use of war as an instrument of national policy, of the armed forces as an internal, political and social instrument of control? In what instances or circumstances will diplomacy be abandoned for war? (Alternative: has been abandoned) What war risks are the Soviets prepared to take in pursuing their policy? In history what are the casus belli as far as the Russians are concerned? Have the Russians in the past seized the initiative to precipitate war and what are the circumstances in which it has occurred? In what ways have geography, climate and national characteristics et al influenced Russian military doctrines? Can one observe recurring strategic moves in Russian history and what aims have been pursued in past wars in securing victory? What does history indicate of Russia's use of offensive warfare, defensive warfare and attrition? To what extent have they relied on unorthodox weapons and tactics, naval and amphibious warfare, exploits by small units, strategems and mass tactics? What has been their historic attitude toward air power, strategic bombing, political and economic warfare and strategic deception? How have the Russians organized their civil populace in war? Have the Russians demonstrated a capacity to appreciate enemy capabilities and intentions and profit from their own mistakes?

3. It is our understanding that your survey will include both governmental and private sources and that it can be completed by 30 September. You are, of course, aware that in perhaps a superficial way, Quincey Wright has already exploited many of these questions in his monumental study of war.

JAMES Q. REBER
Assistant Director
Intelligence Coordination

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